

**Testimony in SUPPORT of SB284:**  
**“An Act Increasing the Age from Eight to Eighteen Years for an Income-Eligible  
Person to Obtain Medical Assistance Regardless of Immigration Status”**

Dear Chairs Abercrombie and Moore, Vice Chairs Lesser and Leeper, Ranking Members Berthel and Case, and members of the Human Services Committee,

My name is William Morico, and I reside in New Haven. I retired from the Healthcare Policy & Benefit Services Division of the Office of the State Comptroller in 2010, where I worked in managing your health benefits, and prepared the health care portion of the Comptroller's budget for submission to OPM. I am a long-term member of the Board of Directors of the Fair Haven Community Health Center and also a patient there.

FQHC's such as Fair Haven treat all uninsured patients, regardless of ability to pay. Currently, Fair Haven provides primary medical care, and dental and behavioral health services, to approximately 1,500 uninsured children, and another 3,500 uninsured adults. The vast majority of this population is undocumented. And while Fair Haven is proud of the quality of care it provides, it is a real burden on our finances. The financial status of these patients also negatively affects their overall health status. If Fair Haven or another FQHC does not provide advanced or needed follow-up services, our staff attempts to refer them to community specialists or the hospital. And if treatment is unavailable, patients may eventually wind up in the emergency room (or worse), and we all pay for those services through emergency Medicaid or uncompensated care.

While I wholehearted support the tenor of SB284, I ask that it, and the coverage under P.A. 21-176 be amended to be effective as of July1, 2022. There are funds available for this expansion now. I also urge you to modify Sec. 5 of P.A. 21-176 which requires a “feasibility study” of expanding state-funded medical assistance to children from age 9-18. This provision is an attempt to defeat any expansion. There are adequate resources at OFA and OLR to provide this needed study; if not, I and others would gladly provide voluntary assistance if needed.

I urge you, and the General Assembly, to pass SB284.

In Health,

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